

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1.       A method for distributing a content object over a network system,  
2   the method comprising step of:  
3                    detecting a request for the content object associated with one of a plurality  
4   of content providers coupled to a network that uses a first transport protocol;  
5                    receiving the content object at a node of the network from the one of the  
6   plurality of content providers;  
7                    buffering the content object at a point distant from the one of the plurality  
8   of content providers and the content receiver; and  
9                    transporting the content object between the node and a content receiver  
10   with a second transport protocol, wherein the first transport protocol is different from the  
11   second transport protocol.

1                   2.       The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2   system as recited in claim 1, wherein the buffer stores at least a portion of the content  
3   object for use by a plurality of content receivers.

1                   3.       The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2   system as recited in claim 1, wherein the transporting step further comprises steps of:  
3                    selecting a channel on a conductor with multiple channels corresponding  
4   to frequency ranges;  
5                    multiplexing a plurality of content objects into a data stream; and  
6                    modulating the data stream onto a carrier frequency within the channel.

1                   4.       The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2   system as recited in claim 1, further comprising a step of communicating to the content  
3   receiver information that indicates how to filter the content object from the incoming  
4   information.

1                   5.       The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2   system as recited in claim 1, wherein the content object comprises at least one of audio  
3   data and video data.

1                   6.       The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2   system as recited in claim 1, wherein:

3 the content object is encoded in a first format at the one of the plurality of  
 4 content providers,  
 5 the content object is encoded in a second format at the node, and  
 6 the first format is different from the second format.

1 7. The method for distributing the content object over the network  
 2 system as recited in claim 1, wherein:

3 the content object is encoded in at a first data rate at the one of the  
 4 plurality of content providers,  
 5 the content object is encoded at a second data rate at the node, and  
 6 the first data rate is different from the second data rate.

1 8. The method for distributing the content object over the network  
 2 system as recited in claim 1, wherein:

3 the content object is encoded in a first format for the first transport  
 4 protocol,  
 5 the content object is encoded in a second format for the second transport  
 6 protocol, and  
 7 the first format is different from the second format.

1 9. The method for distributing the content object over the network  
 2 system as recited in claim 1, wherein:

3 the content object is encoded at a first data rate for the first transport  
 4 protocol,  
 5 the content object is encoded at a second data rate for the second transport  
 6 protocol, and  
 7 the first data rate is different from the second data rate.

1 10. The method for distributing the content object over the network  
 2 system as recited in claim 1, wherein the transporting step comprises a step of coupling  
 3 the content object to at least one of a hybrid fiber/coaxial plant, a hybrid fiber/twisted pair  
 4 plant and a wireless plant.

1 11. The method for distributing the content object over the network  
 2 system as recited in claim 1, wherein the second transport protocol comprises an MPEG-2  
 3 transport protocol.

12. The method for distributing the content object over the network system as recited in claim 1, wherein the second transport protocol comprises packetized content object constituents in a multiplexed data stream where the constituents are distinguished within the multiplexed datastream with program identifiers and are reconstituted into the content object in synchronization using embedded time stamps.

13. The method for distributing the content object over the network system as recited in claim 1, wherein the network comprises an Internet protocol packet network to transport content objects separate from the Internet.

14. The method for distributing the content object over the network system as recited in claim 1, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

15. A content distribution system for coupling content between a content provider and a content receiver, the content distribution system comprising:

- a node that relays a content object that originated from the content provider;
- a network coupling the content provider to the node, wherein the network uses a first transport protocol;
- a data channel coupling the node to the content receiver, wherein content object is transported with the data channel using MPEG-2 transport protocol.

16. The content distribution system for coupling content between the content provider and the content receiver as recited in claim 15, further comprising an access control system that controls access to the wide area network.

17. The content distribution system for coupling content between the content provider and the content receiver as recited in claim 15, further comprising:

- a multiplexer coupled to the node, and
- a modulator coupled to the data channel.

18. The content distribution system for coupling content between the content provider and the content receiver as recited in claim 15, wherein the content receiver receives the content object encoded in a MPEG format.

1           19.    The content distribution system for coupling content between the  
2 content provider and the content receiver as recited in claim 15, wherein the node stores  
3 portions of content objects in at least one of a first-in-first-out methodology and a  
4 standard filing system with expiration triggers.

1           20.    A method for distributing a content object over a network system,  
2 the method comprising step of:  
3                detecting a request for the content object associated with one of a plurality  
4 of content providers coupled to a network that uses a first transport protocol;  
5                sending the content object from one of the plurality of content providers to  
6 a cache with the network; and  
7                transporting the content object between the cache and a content receiver  
8 with a second transport protocol different from the first transport protocol.

1           21.    The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2 system as recited in claim 20, wherein the transporting step further comprises steps of:  
3                selecting a channel on a conductor with multiple channels corresponding  
4 to frequency ranges;  
5                multiplexing a plurality of content objects into a data stream; and  
6                modulating the data stream onto a carrier frequency within the channel.

1           22.    The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2 system as recited in claim 20, further comprising a step of communicating to the content  
3 receiver information that indicates how to filter the content object from the incoming  
4 information.

1           23.    The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2 system as recited in claim 20, wherein the second transport protocol comprises an MPEG-  
3 2 transport protocol.

1           24.    The method for distributing the content object over the network  
2 system as recited in claim 20, wherein the second transport protocol comprises packetized  
3 content object constituents in a multiplexed data stream where the constituents are  
4 distinguished within the multiplexed datastream with program identifiers and are  
5 reconstituted into the content object in synchronization using embedded time stamps.

